



CITY OF ROLLING HILLS ESTATES

CITY MANAGER'S CORNER

September 10, 2008

RHE is Getting Greener

With 5,714 City street trees, 178 acres of parks, 36 acres of preserved open space, 25 miles of equestrian trails and 10 miles of bike paths, Rolling Hills Estates has a long and proud history of being a "green" city and thoughtful caretaker of the environment. Continuing in this tradition, it should come as no surprise that the City of Rolling Hills Estates has pledged to do its part to combat climate change and make our community an even greener one.

Last year, the Rolling Hills Estates City Council signed on to the U.S. Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement, as part of the milestones of the "Cool Cities" campaign. This committed the City to reducing its global warming emissions through actions such as increasing energy efficiency, and promoting the use of clean and renewable energy resources. This also entails conducting a global emissions inventory and creating a Climate Action Plan.

To assist in this effort, the City Council has created an Environmental Advisory Committee to make recommendations on establishing policies and regulations that address the City's impact on global warming. The City is currently gathering the necessary data to complete a greenhouse gas emissions inventory, and expects to have the results early next year. When completed, the inventory will further help the City develop policies and programs for specific emissions reductions to help reduce the City's carbon footprint, and to track the progress of those policies and programs.

The Environmental Advisory Committee is wasting no time and is already hard at work establishing goals and objectives, and looking at a variety of actions to increase energy efficiency and water conservation and promote the use of clean and renewable resources. The Committee is comprised of nine members of the community, including one Council Member, one Planning Commissioner, one Park & Activities Commissioner, and six members of the public, appointed by the City Council, who represent a cross-section of interests and disciplines. The Committee will also be working on putting together an Environmental Handbook – to be made available in electronic format on the City's website – that will highlight the City's environmental programs and activities, and provide information on how residents can be even better stewards of the environment.

At City Hall, we are doing our part by replacing out-dated light fixtures with ones that are more energy (and cost) efficient. We've eliminated the use of Styrofoam cups, and are looking at purchasing products and office supplies that are more eco-friendly, provided that it is cost-effective to do so.